# Conference on Disarmament

English

**Final record of the one thousand four hundred and thirteenth plenary meeting**
Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Tuesday, 14 March 2017, at 10.05 a.m.

*President:* Mr. Alexey Borodavkin.....(Russian Federation)

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**The President** (*spoke in Russian*): I call to order the 1413th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

Excellencies, distinguished colleagues, ladies and gentlemen, before we begin our work today, I would like to warmly welcome our new colleague who has only just taken up her duties as her Government's representative at the Conference: Ambassador Maria Nazareth Farani Azevêdo, the Permanent Representative of Brazil. Allow me to take this opportunity, on behalf of my Government and of the Conference, to assure you, Madam Ambassador, of our full cooperation and support in the fulfilment of your new responsibilities.

As I said in the informal plenary meeting on Friday, 10 March, I propose the following order of business for our meeting today. I would like to begin by presenting information on the work carried out by the presidency over the previous week and then give the floor to delegates who wish to speak in plenary. I will then close the formal plenary meeting and we will have an informal plenary meeting in order to continue discussing the draft decision on the Conference's programme of work for 2017.

If there are no objections to this order of business, I will now say a few words on the work carried out by the presidency.

In my capacity as President of the Conference on Disarmament, I have distributed — with the assistance of the Conference secretariat — an official proposal on a programme of work for the Conference, contained in document CD/WP.600. We endeavoured to accommodate the comments of our colleagues as far as possible in this document, but many of the comments were incompatible. As a result, the Russian presidency was unable to fully reflect all of the comments, although we did our utmost to ensure that the revised document is close to the consensus.

I will focus on the specific changes made since the previous draft.

In the first preambular paragraph, the word "role" has been changed to the stronger "responsibility".

In the fifth preambular paragraph, the phrase "illegal non-State militarized groups" has been deleted. Despite the fact that some members would have preferred to change it to something more general, we considered the statement contradictory and open to ambiguous interpretation by other delegations.

Preambular paragraph 6 has been expanded by adding the words "access to" after the word "possible" in reference to biological and toxin materials. This is because chemical weapons have already been used by terrorists on multiple occasions, but access to and use of biological materials — although, thankfully, not yet a reality — present a real and growing threat, and we must not allow this threat to materialize.

Preambular paragraph 9 has been changed to remove a reference to the working groups, which we have done without altering the meaning of the paragraph.

Responding to the requests of Conference members, we added a new second part to preambular paragraph 13 which reads, and I quote: "and emphasizing the need to resume substantive work".

Following consultations with the secretariat, operative paragraph 8 — which made reference to rules 30 and 31 of the Conference's rules of procedure — has been deleted. We acted on the premise that the Conference, its working groups and their subsidiary bodies would in all cases be guided by the rules of procedure anyway.

I believe that, as a result of these amendments, our draft is ever closer to reaching a consensus. I intend to hold another informal round of consultations immediately after this plenary meeting in order to give the floor to delegates who have not been able to speak or were not able to attend on Friday, 10 March.

Following this, if, by 6 p.m. on Thursday, 16 March, no delegate has given a clear indication of unwillingness to join the consensus for any reason, we will present the Conference's draft programme of work for adoption on Friday, 17 March, at the morning plenary meeting of the Conference.

However, if we receive indications that consensus has not been reached on the draft programme of work, we will inform the plenary meeting on the morning of 17 March of the lack of consensus, and also take stock of the Russian presidency.

I thank you for your attention. We will now proceed to the discussion.

Brazil is first on the list of speakers. Madam Ambassador, you have the floor.

**Ms. Azevêdo** (Brazil): Mr. President, at the outset, I would like to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament. Let me express the appreciation of Brazil for your efforts in seeking to advance the work of this forum. Please rest assured of my delegation's full support and cooperation in the discharge of your duties.

I am truly honoured to represent my country in the Conference on Disarmament. Allow me to recognize that disarmament lies at the heart of our calling as diplomats. It harks back to the very beginning of the State order. It is one of the valuable elements of the old diplomacy, which sought the alignment of common goods with national and regional interests, the preference for the possible over the merely desirable and the cultivation of what we know today as "confidence-building measures".

Disarmament is therefore essential for the strengthening of international peace and security, the prevention of nuclear war, respect for international humanitarian law and international human rights law, and the economic and social advancement of all human beings. The continued nuclear and conventional arms race not only threatens human life with mutual destruction but deprives humanity of enormous resources, both material and human, which could instead be made available for the purpose of economic and social development. It also runs counter to the new global consensus on the Sustainable Development Goals.

Like most delegations in this room, Brazil is very concerned about the stalemate that has been preventing the adoption and implementation of a programme of work since 1996, but we continue to believe that it is possible to revitalize the Conference and break its long-lasting deadlock. That depends essentially on political will, good faith and renewed efforts by all delegations.

Mr. President, I would like to reaffirm that nuclear disarmament remains the highest priority for Brazil among the core issues of the Conference on Disarmament. Nuclear weapons are the sole anthropogenic factor that can instantly destroy humanity and irreversibly change the Earth. Unlike chemical and biological weapons — the other two categories of weapons of mass destruction — nuclear weapons are not explicitly and comprehensively prohibited. Yet, the consequences of a nuclear weapon detonation, notably from a humanitarian perspective, are far more devastating and diffuse than the effects of chemical and biological weapons. Lack of progress on nuclear disarmament underscores a dangerous absence of political will and urgency on the part of States that mistakenly feel comfortable and safe with the current status quo.

Over the past few years, Brazil has been actively engaged in the Humanitarian Initiative, which has led to the convening of a United Nations conference to negotiate a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons. Past experience in disarmament has demonstrated that, first, a legally binding norm has to be established in order to pave the way for the elimination of weapons of mass destruction. Therefore, we believe that a prohibition treaty will provide a point of departure for the actual elimination of nuclear weapons, as was the case with biological and chemical weapons — first outlawed by the 1925 Geneva Protocol and subsequently banned, in a comprehensive manner, by the Biological Weapons Convention in 1972 and the Chemical Weapons Convention in 1993.

Brazil encourages all United Nations Members to support and participate actively in the forthcoming negotiations. A prohibition treaty will complement and strengthen the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime, in particular with respect to the implementation of article VI of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Non-nuclear-weapon States which decide to take part in the negotiations will reaffirm their commitment never to acquire nuclear weapons as well as reinforce their own credentials and the non-proliferation regime. We also consider that additional measures aimed at the complete elimination of

nuclear arsenals and verification of compliance can be pursued within a framework laid out by the prohibition treaty itself.

Mr. President, the Brazilian delegation remains ready to engage constructively and contribute to the efforts to break the stalemate in the Conference on Disarmament. We welcome the decision adopted by the Conference to establish a working group to discuss the way ahead. We hope the activities of the working group as well as the informal consultations undertaken by the presidency will contribute to the adoption of a programme of work as soon as possible.

Brazil will join the consensus emerging from consultations on the draft programme of work submitted to the consideration of the Conference on Disarmament. However, we believe that a programme of work should encompass a negotiating mandate on at least one of the core issues. As a matter of priority, Brazil favours the establishment of a subsidiary body within the Conference in order to start negotiations on nuclear disarmament, but we are also prepared to consider proposals for the commencement of negotiations on the remaining core issues, namely, the prevention of an arms race in outer space, a fissile material treaty and negative security assurances.

To conclude, Mr. President, with regard to a fissile material treaty, Brazil welcomes the beginning of discussions in 2017 in the context of the high-level expert preparatory group, and we highlight the importance of a prohibition against the production of or the use of already existing fissile material for nuclear weapons and the placing of all such fissile material under international safeguards.

**The President** (*spoke in Russian*): I thank you, Madam Ambassador, and I once again welcome you to the Conference on Disarmament and reiterate that we are ready and willing to cooperate closely with you. I would also like to thank you for your warm words of greeting to the Russian presidency of the Conference.

Next on the list of speakers is the Ambassador of the Syrian Arab Republic. You have the floor.

**Mr. Aala** (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): Mr. President, as I am taking the floor for the first time at this formal meeting, I wish to congratulate you on the way in which you are conducting the proceedings of the Conference on Disarmament. We fully appreciate the significant efforts undertaken by the Russian presidency and its determination to break the stalemate by presenting a draft programme of work for the Conference.

I also wish to thank the Permanent Representative of Romania for the firm action he took during his presidency, and to commend Mr. Michael Møller, the Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament, on his support for the work of the Conference. I hereby reaffirm my delegation's willingness to cooperate fully with you all in this regard. I also wish to join you in welcoming the new colleague, the Permanent Representative of Brazil. We assure her of our full cooperation and wish her success in her mission.

Mr. President, disarmament and arms control form part of the system for the maintenance of international peace and security, and the Charter of the United Nations calls for cooperation to achieve that aim. The Syrian Arab Republic believes that multilateral treaties which are consistent with the Charter are the only sustainable means of addressing international disarmament and security issues. It underscores the need for all legal instruments pertaining to disarmament to be negotiated in the framework of the Conference on Disarmament, which is the sole relevant multilateral negotiating body, and it stresses the need to respect the principle of consensus in its work so that the security concerns of all States are taken into account.

The Syrian Arab Republic reaffirms its principled position regarding the priority of all aspects of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, and it emphasizes the need to combine efforts to achieve nuclear non-proliferation with concurrent efforts aimed at nuclear disarmament. Progress on both tracks is an indispensable precondition for the strengthening of international peace and security. The tenth special session of the General Assembly identified nuclear disarmament as a top priority because of the unprecedented threat of nuclear weapons to human existence. Moreover, as a multilateral legal obligation,

it should not be conditional on confidence-building measures or other disarmament efforts. In this regard, we reaffirm the unanimous conclusion of the International Court of Justice that negotiations aimed at producing a legally binding instrument conducive to comprehensive nuclear disarmament, under strict and effective international control, must be continued and concluded in good faith. Syria emphasizes the need to launch negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament as a matter of urgency in order to achieve that objective.

My country supports action in the Conference on Disarmament to draft an internationally binding treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons in the context of a balanced and comprehensive programme of work for the Conference. It should take into consideration negotiations concerning the four main issues on the agenda relating to nuclear weapons. Accordingly, it should be applicable to stockpiles of such material, which should be verifiable, and it should require the destruction of existing stockpiles of fissile material as well as any new material that has been produced.

The total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only absolute guarantee against their use or threat of their use. This being the case, Syria underscores the need for the States parties to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) that possess nuclear weapons to comply with their obligations not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States, or against areas that are free of nuclear weapons, at any time and under any circumstances, pursuant to the agreement reached by consensus at the 2010 NPT Review Conference, which reaffirmed previous agreements to provide effective, universal, unconditional, non-discriminatory and legally binding security guarantees to all non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the Treaty, and to launch negotiations on a universal binding instrument aimed at providing such guarantees to non-nuclear-weapon States.

Syria reiterates its support for the joint draft Treaty of the Russian Federation and China on Prevention of the Placement of Weapons in Outer Space and of the Threat or Use of Force against Outer Space Objects. Based on the initiative introduced to the Conference in 2008 by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, it makes a constructive contribution to the work of the Conference and lays the foundation for the adoption of a legally binding international instrument leading to the prevention of an arms race in outer space and emphasizing the peaceful use of outer space.

The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones constitutes an important step towards the global elimination of nuclear weapons and contributes to nuclear non-proliferation. It is essential in this connection for nuclear-weapon States to provide unconditional guarantees to all countries in the region regarding the use or threat of the use of nuclear weapons, to ratify the protocols to all treaties providing for the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, to withdraw any reservations or interpretative declarations that are inconsistent with the objectives or purposes of such treaties, and to respect the status of nuclear-weapon-free zones. Notwithstanding the provision for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, in accordance with Security Council resolution 487 (1981) and paragraph 14 of Security Council resolution 687 (1991); notwithstanding the decision by the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference to extend the Treaty indefinitely, based on an integrated package comprising the adoption of a resolution on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East; and notwithstanding the reaffirmation of that aim at subsequent NPT Review Conferences, most recently in 2010, the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East continues to be confronted by the intransigence of Israel, the only party in the region that possesses nuclear, biological and chemical weapons of mass destruction, and by its refusal to accede to any of the relevant legal instruments on disarmament and elimination of weapons of mass destruction, to relinquish such weapons and to subject its nuclear facilities to the comprehensive safeguards regime of the International Atomic Energy Agency. The failure to convene in 2012 the conference on the establishment of a Middle East weapon-free zone contravenes the letter and spirit of the collective agreement contained in the Final Document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference. We express our deep regret at the artificial obstacles and excuses that precluded the convening of the conference by the parties concerned. We also deplore the failure of the United Nations to play a role in the preparatory meetings for the convening of the conference and reaffirm the need for the United Nations to serve as an

umbrella organization for the purpose. In the light of the current preparations for the 2020 NPT Review Conference, and given the failure of the 2015 Conference owing to the renunciation by some States, including the Treaty depositary States, of their responsibilities and obligations under the Treaty, Syria emphasizes that the establishment of such a zone is an integral part of States parties' obligations under the Treaty and calls upon all States parties to respect that obligation.

Mr. President, chemical terrorism and the risk of terrorist groups acquiring and using chemical weapons or toxic chemical materials in diverse locations pose a serious and growing threat. While we reiterate our condemnation of the use of chemical weapons and toxic chemicals by anybody in any location at any time, the continued access by terrorist groups, such as Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), Al-Nusrah Front and other terrorist organizations within and outside Syria, to toxic chemicals is extremely dangerous, and States must assume responsibility and comply with their obligations to prevent it. In this context, we express our support for the important initiative by the Russian Federation aimed at confronting the threat of biological and chemical terrorism by promoting effective international cooperation in the face of this growing threat and developing an appropriate response and preventive action.

In the light of the foregoing, Mr. President, my delegation welcomes your proposal to the Conference of a draft programme of work for this year's session. As we stated during the informal meeting last Friday, we believe that this proposal is a step in the right direction. We hope that it will be adopted as the basis for negotiations in the near future on nuclear disarmament and on the development of a convention on the elimination of biological and chemical terrorism.

**The President** *(spoke in Russian)*: I thank the Ambassador for his statement, for the warm words extended to the presidency and for his support.

The next speaker on the list is the Ambassador of Pakistan. You have the floor.

**Ms. Janjua** (Pakistan): Mr. President, I would also like to thank you very much for all your efforts in trying to have some consensus on a programme of work. We would like to express our support for your efforts and also the work that you undertake in this regard and hope that it meets with success.

I would also like to begin by welcoming Ambassador Maria Nazareth Farani Azevêdo to the Conference on Disarmament. I wish her all success in her new responsibilities here. She knows Geneva well and I am sure she will be — she is — a very valuable member of our community here.

Mr. President, I shall depart from Geneva over the coming weekend to assume my new responsibilities in Islamabad. As this is probably the last time that I am taking the floor in the plenary of the Conference on Disarmament as the Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations and other international organizations in Geneva, including the Conference on Disarmament, I wish to make some farewell remarks and share a few personal reflections.

This is my third tenure of duty in Geneva and it turned out to be the shortest, around one year and half. During this brief yet eventful stay, Pakistan held the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament as well as of the Fifth Review Conference of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons. We also had the pleasure of serving as Vice-President and Facilitator at the Eighth Review Conference of the Biological Weapons Convention.

Mr. President, despite all the challenges confronting the international security and disarmament landscape, my latest experience renewed my faith in multilateralism and in the potential of the Conference on Disarmament, and I mean that. The Conference is a unique and unparalleled forum that deals with vital issues concerning the supreme national security interests of States. It allows all militarily significant States of the world to interact on an equal footing and explore meaningful solutions to the issues on the Conference's agenda.

The Conference on Disarmament has been remarkably successful in producing landmark treaties, such as the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. Of late, the results produced by the Conference on Disarmament

seem to be falling short of expectations, but the forum itself cannot be faulted for this situation. Its structure and procedures are geared to producing productive outcomes. The vital element that must be added is scrupulous adherence to the cardinal principle of equal and undiminished security for all States. A consistent observance of this principle will unlock the ongoing stalemate, and we are sure that your proposal in this regard can help us move forward.

Any possible solution, whether it is pursued inside or outside the Conference on Disarmament, no matter how well-intentioned or justified, will not work if it leaves any State feeling disproportionately vulnerable. There is simply no shortcut to building and strengthening a durable international security architecture.

Mr. President, it is our collective responsibility to revitalize this forum through a genuinely cooperative and non-discriminatory effort that would lead to the start of negotiations on equitable treaties. Discrimination against States and arbitrary revisionism of the global nuclear order have to be shunned. It is important to evolve non-discriminatory and equitable criteria for the membership of non-nuclear-weapon States in multilateral export control regimes, including the Nuclear Suppliers Group, and for trade and peaceful nuclear technologies. New realities and the legitimate right of all States to live in peace must be recognized and respected.

I firmly believe that the Conference retains the ability to undertake meaningful initiatives that result in enhanced security for all States. For that to take place, we might have to dial down our insistence on restricting this forum to the ideal situation of holding treaty negotiations all the time. We need to utilize this forum realistically and productively by having the flexibility to hold substantive discussions on the existing agenda items as well as on new security-related issues. Only then can we build convergences and narrow down our differences, paving the way for even more substantive negotiations.

Otherwise, we run the risk of remaining mired in a clash of competing maximalist approaches and priorities. With some guarded optimism, I see the working group on the way ahead as offering a promising opportunity to undertake a holistic yet pragmatic review of the Conference's activities. I thank my remaining colleague for taking this initiative.

The latest proposal offered by you, Mr. President, can also go a very long way in getting the Conference on Disarmament back to substantive work. A breakthrough requires creativity and realism, along with an acute appreciation of redlines that ought not to be crossed. In other words, it requires a sustained display of diplomatic skills, which are present in such rich abundance in this forum. We only need to put them into practice.

Mr. President, an issue that has remained close to my heart throughout my diplomatic career is that of women's empowerment and the promotion of women's participation, particularly in areas related to security policy. The equal, full and effective participation of both men and women is one of the essential factors for the attainment of sustainable peace and security. I tried to promote this issue during the presidency of Pakistan last year in the Conference, including by holding a special informal plenary on women and disarmament. We have to constantly sensitize ourselves and the broader international community to this imperative. I was greatly encouraged by the positive feedback and response from all Conference members on this matter.

Mr. President, although I am leaving Geneva, I shall still closely follow developments at the Conference on Disarmament in my new position.

For the unstinting support, generous cooperation and warm friendship that was extended to me during my stay, I wish to thank each one of you: the Ambassadors, the delegates of fellow member States, our wonderful hosts — the Government of Switzerland and the City of Geneva, and the secretariat, ably led by Mr. Michael Møller and assisted by remarkably dedicated officers like Ms. Soliman, who can fight and can be hard as nails when the issue comes up — and I thank her very much for the support she provided us in trying to get the conference on the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons started, when we were getting the process done — and Mr. Kalbusch, who is always there smiling and ready to help, as well as the conference services staff, the interpreters and the many others working behind the scenes.

I also wish to express my special gratitude to my own delegation, especially Mr. Usman Jadoon, my constant shadow in the Conference on Disarmament and other arms control-related issues. I thank him very much for his hard work, his consistent support and for being brilliant as he is.

As a last word, on 17 March there will be a commemoration of the seventieth anniversary of the independence of Pakistan. We have an event in the plenary hall followed by a reception, to which you are all invited. It would be a great opportunity. This will be my last event in Geneva and it will be my goodbye. But, as my French friends often say: never say "adieu", always say "au revoir". So, I say "au revoir" and thank you very much.

**The President** (*spoke in Russian*): I sincerely thank Ambassador Janjua for her statement and, on behalf of the presidency, I would also like to say a few words.

Madam Ambassador, on behalf of all my colleagues I would like to thank you for your work with the Conference on Disarmament. We are all greatly appreciative of your exceptional professionalism, commitment and persistence in promoting the interests of Pakistan at the Conference. At the same time, we are grateful to you for the exceptional kindness and friendliness you have shown in your participation over the year and a half that you have represented Pakistan at the Conference. We thank you as well for your intellectual contributions to the work of other disarmament forums that have taken place on the international stage in Geneva during this period.

We will miss you, of course, but I sincerely hope that your new high-level post in Islamabad will allow you to make regular visits to Geneva to meet with old friends. We wish you prosperity, inexhaustible energy and every success in diplomacy. It goes without saying that we, the delegation of the Russian Federation and myself specifically, will be attending the events celebrating Pakistani Independence Day. I thank you for your attention.

I now give the floor to the representative of Israel.

**Ms. Yaron** (Israel): Mr. President, as this is the first time our delegation is taking the floor during your presidency, please allow me to convey our appreciation for the way you are conducting our deliberations and assure you of our full support in the conduct of your duties.

Mr. President, I would like to reply to comments made towards my country by our Syrian colleague. Israel recognizes the importance of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and its contribution to the global non-proliferation regime and regrets that the 2015 NPT Review Conference ended without a consensus outcome document. However, blame for the Review Conference's lack of agreement on issues relating to the Middle East at the NPT cannot be placed at the doorsteps of Israel, despite the earlier speaker's claim.

Israel participated in the Review Conference as an observer for the first time after 20 years. This was done as part and parcel of our constructive engagement in the direct regional dialogue between Israel and some of its neighbours, facilitated by Finnish Ambassador Laajava to address the broad range of security challenges facing the region, as well as the arrangements necessary for convening a conference in Helsinki on the establishment of the Middle East as a zone free of wars, conflicts and all weapons of mass destruction and delivery means. Despite five rounds of consultations in Switzerland, which were conducted in a substantive and business-like manner, and despite the willingness of Israel to participate in a sixth round, the Arab group chose to discontinue these talks. It is high time that the Arab group chooses the road of conciliation, direct consultation and the building of trust over the road of confrontation and hostility.

Israel continues to believe that direct dialogue addressing the broad range of security chalienges between the regional parties is fundamental for any meaningful consensual discussion in this matter. Israel, for its part, will continue to seek such a meaningful regional discussion that could lead to a more peaceful and secure Middle East.

**The President** (*spoke in Russian*): I thank the representative of Israel for her statement and for her greetings to the presidency.

I now give the floor to the Ambassador of China.

**Mr. Fu** Cong (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): Mr. President, I have asked for the floor, first, to express my welcome to the Ambassador of Brazil, Maria. I had the pleasure and honour of observing her work in my former capacity as adviser to the Director-General of the World Health Organization. I know how effective she is, so I look forward to working with her.

To Ambassador Temina Janjua, I would like to say that it was a great honour and pleasure to work with you, not only on disarmament but also on other issues. We benefited a lot from your insight and wisdom. I wish you all the best. I also want to congratulate you on your well-deserved promotion, and just to say that you will be sorely missed here in Geneva. All the best, Madam.

**The President** (*spoke in Russian*): I thank the Ambassador of China for his statement and now give the floor to the Ambassador of Syria.

**Mr. Aala** (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): Mr. President, I would like to associate myself fully with the statement made by my colleague from China, who expressed our feelings of sadness at the departure of our colleague, the Permanent Representative of Pakistan, who will be sorely missed. I also wish to congratulate her on the new functions that she will assume in her country and on her important contribution to the work of the Conference on Disarmament.

Mr. President, I would like to emphasize one point relating to the statement made by Israel in response to our observations. The basic threat to security and stability in our region stems from the fact that Israel alone possesses weapons of mass destruction. It is the only party in the region that possesses nuclear, biological and chemical weapons, and the only party that refuses to accede to all international multilateral treaties aimed at eliminating such weapons. Syria has taken vigorous action to achieve the goal of establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone. For instance, it submitted a draft resolution on the establishment of such a zone in 2003 shortly before its membership of the Security Council came to an end. The resolution was not adopted, for reasons that I will refrain from discussing at present, but we still expect the Council to fulfil its duty and to adopt the resolution. Secondly, we have already referred to the artificial obstacles and impediments that precluded the convening of the 2012 conference. These obstacles persist, including the refusal by Israel to allow the United Nations to play a role in the preparatory meetings for the conference and its refusal to hold the conference under the umbrella of the United Nations. This was one of the key factors that led to its failure. I therefore reiterate the points I have made in this area.

**The President** (*spoke in Russian*): I thank the Ambassador of the Syrian Arab Republic for his statement.

This brings me to the end of the list of speakers, and I do not see anyone else wishing to take the floor.

I recognize New Zealand.

**Ms. Donnelly** (New Zealand): Mr. President, I had not intended to take the floor, but I did want to take this opportunity to convey my deep appreciation for the important role that Ambassador Janjua has played during her time in Geneva. Her diplomatic skills and professionalism are well known to all and have been commented on already by others in the chamber. I can only echo those. I did want also to thank her on a personal level for the inspiration she has provided — and, I have no doubt, will continue to provide — to women in diplomacy and in the area of disarmament and arms control, in particular.

Ambassador, your intelligence, kindness, sense of humour and encouragement will be sorely missed. On behalf of the New Zealand delegation, I wish you all the very best for the future and congratulations on your appointment.

**The President** (*spoke in Russian*): I thank the representative of New Zealand for her statement. As there are no other speakers, I would like to add something to my opening statement.

Among the amendments that we made to document CD/WP.600, containing the draft programme of work for the Conference, in operative paragraph 2 the Russian Federation proposed that Ambassador Yury Ambrazevich of Belarus be appointed Co-

Chair of the working group on an international convention for the suppression of acts of chemical and biological terrorism. I wish to draw your attention to this amendment to the document.

If there are no further speakers today, I will close the plenary meeting and I remind members that we will now hold informal consultations.

I declare the plenary meeting closed.

*The meeting rose at 11 a.m.*